

# #3

March 2006

Wherever We Put Our Hats  
ed. Jon Leon  
[wwpoh@comcast.net](mailto:wwpoh@comcast.net)  
[www.wwpoh.blogspot.com](http://www.wwpoh.blogspot.com)

\$5 per  
free for unemployed

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Wherever we put our hats is our home  
Our aged heads are our homes

--Louis Z.



### A Young Chandelier

I grew up in the world of the weak & the privileged  
*arrogant, cursed, empty & youthful*  
I hated the cops without mercy, even those I sold licorice-whips,  
Pepsi, & liquor

A fringe of my sight was twined into their eyes  
though in looking away I could find only icons of one old religion blown up  
to the size of a magnified lime on a radiant billboard  
but no large Corona.

I never laid down on immaculate lawns by the modified corpse  
of a sunbathing boy  
I rested away from the proxies of death near the love of my life  
on a hand me down bed.

For a self I conceived of a young chandelier  
in the chrysalis days of pure marketing lit to whet flames  
in the fires of capital.

Now the flames fill up the lens & I hang in the foyer  
of some evangelical killer  
pouring my light on the coin purse of his tiny head as it  
hurtles toward death.

For the president's funeral gold epaulets,  
I had a rain of warm ash on my collar, I had a pallet of spit.

Everyday I made use of that piteous target  
died in its pieties, reasoned my scorn so the bowl of life  
filled up with piss.

After my walks I would lollygag, stall  
I would not think at all of what I am impossibly totaled

Think *sweet recovery barred golden gate*  
or *show me again that gold burns*.

Because I saw life in its porous consent  
as a rapturous frailty I thought love could shatter  
it only domesticates death.

**'the bell of my health & good spirit is ringing'**

The bell of my health & good spirit is ringing  
the whiteness of snow is replaced  
the warped middle gear of the idling weather has ruptured  
& left me this blue.

I lived in its dome as the slow exo-skeletal rot became dress, became the one coat  
& one ring-tone transmitted as sacred.

Even my beloved flowers, of which I know nothing, not even their names  
exist to me only as expressions of extreme decadence in nature  
yet they, like me, are mid-western, an  
expression of extreme fear.

Framed in a blue to black panel of wood is an image of frolicking mallards  
it is the pre-ash of a culture that's soon to be hunted by duck  
or a clown's horn erupting point blank at my ears.

If one squeezes its bulb then the tulip will die  
before birth. When it honks there's enough for the loss  
of diaphanous violet, the drums of my ears  
such things that aren't meant to be drank.

Breathing, the skull's white patina is shot through the sky  
its nets are defrocked, they are thriving.

**'Do not repeat 'sea' I had'**

Do not repeat 'sea' I had  
said to myself, in the ocean of what  
missing love I had come to inhabit  
a terror of missing its breadth  
when of absent particular ardor  
I thought I would sing I would find  
only marble.

Its not the classical whiteness  
of Helen, whose forehead enclosed  
a rough star. Nor a singly, unbeautiful  
verse agitation, written as if  
in revisionist grace, the past had come less  
to its ruins & more to the shores  
of the old Cirque Moderne.

All the blanched rocks hurt  
the eyes in the sun, the spangles  
are gone from my lips. Had I followed  
a resolute love not the lie  
of renewal perhaps I would hear  
the waves again start in their driving  
air slowly, to move on hegemony's lair.

13.

Fast forward through footage of a black macaque walking upright, behavior attributed to brain damage. No need for soldiers, just a couple of sensational killjoys. Circles in on an open mouth, and pursues something toothless or gummed up. The weeks go floating by in my depleted-uranium sportscar, and the cruisers, destroyers, and patrol boats encircle Basra before I can kick it into another gear. Someone says the CIA is a network of pseudo-NGOs, and while I can't prove that Agent Fez rocked out in 1981, I can demonstrate that the laundry wasn't left unfolded by accident. Out on water, where massive 30-meter waves aren't so irregular after all, I skim oil, skim oil, skim oil, skim oil off the surface. And oysters squeeze out flammable pearls, and the squids squirt petroleum, and skates glide on jet fuel, and barnacles attach to plastic. Wetsuits. Undemeath *Potemkin*, where the massive rudder hangs, our suction cups attach to eroding steel. Getting inside, into the brig. The munitions store, tracing my profile on shell casings. Looking for gunpowder; settling for tactical nukes. Can you say "newcoolear"? Ok, so I've flipped channels, but my whole family lives amid plankton. Manna, or something at least absorbent. If we're going to build an entire bureau crazy around the Intelligence Czar, I'd recommend housing the whole shebang in a domed complex at the bottom of the Mariana Trench. Lifeforms require only extreme heat and chemical baths to simulate what we'll find wriggling amid the stellar factories.

**14.**

To convert. On Sunday, cabernet sauvignon speaks a purple sky. Crickets whistle early, and your sense of autumn is July. Peace of a whirring ceiling fan, although if it were to come unhinged, how would words describe? Everyone's adapting *The Odyssey* to their own ends: all around, characters have decided that Circe's a better choice than Penelope. To heal the aimless mind. Where content is wrapped around a political convention, you'd like to send your beliefs on strike. Values decoded and put down: each spirit a different flavor of ice cream. Dovetail, or the cooing one makes while at a feeder. Feel anachronism in its fur coat, which is uncomfortable in heat. On radio speakers, your city's mayor mumbles something about "Hydrogen City" and fuel cells. Saudi Arabia advertises a massive yard sale in Yemen. Hills to climb. New pavement, and replacing police car sirens with locust hums. There's economic potential in water, but all you can see are innumerable Hindenburgs lighting up the fright. On Titan, it's unlikely that the Cassini probe will locate Polyphemus immersed in mealtime. It's in the rings, man, the rings, and whatever happened to that anomalous x-ray source amid their orbits? Billions of baby universes destroyed because you wagered entire Saturdays against the work week, and when the game went too far, Pops raised his voice and sent you up the road to McDonald's™ for a job application. "I'm lovin' it," which is another way of saying that you miss the kaleidoscope of unplayed conversations and goggled parties. Were it not for hammers and saws, the quiet out here would wither you. Let this be a lesson against the nuclear family, which sheds too many electrons to avoid an easy chair. Let you be stapled to a bulletin board, to be remembered as a fond vacation gone missing among the conch shells.

Richie in his blue jeans, the jail house city dice  
  
we have already  
once harbored starvation wage, these piss pipes  
  
where guilt and violence  
are repaid with guilt and violence  
  
the flower box in the factory,  
a reconstruction of myth, and  
what seemed seven hard years  
of rain  
a testing exile



in boxwood and dimes  
*The Cadillacs* for you greg, a night  
of impettigo

as I am shamed back  
& with me all impavid speech

I watch at twilight

the plucked umbel  
thrown to the siderite

and now knowing  
we who  
wither in  
the heart of jacks

the black bled so deep  
it was mazarine

Shostakovich, the pluvia of our unsanction  
something *beyond* the torpid men  
we had come to leave

we,  
strumpets in the city streets  
being struck at  
like plumbago

and being thrown away,  
we seeped further in

where Serenata's evening song  
drives unfree labor out to men  
& seen contorted nature,

hyssop to the serpent  
which coils its eggs  
she is but a hawk

the paradoxical solace

the road that lies ahead  
to liberation

is blushed in habit  
to maintain a thrall

sickle this bastard  
hew the sauros which digs  
in fertile grounds

## Religion is a Personal Matter

When god left the Metro Area of The Empyrean—oh boy, what hipster antics.

God fished himself some bright-eyed slinks, gifting their gab with Empyrean hindsight.

Said slinks slid lustily through the suburbs of “mind”, calling it “heart”.

But when the gifted gab wore off (several times a day, sometimes twice in one minute) said slinks slumped onto other slinks, amassing into a huge rude heap of sunken slinks linked together, calling it, “society”.

God, as it turned out, died a grand hipster’s death [the date is disputed, but I’d say Gutenberg’s 1452 (name me a slink more trans-simulated, more hard-architected, more turbo-fluffed than he)].

God’s last act was to shed a single tear as he had himself *de-he-ified* into a she [disputed, controversial] if only flash...then fused out, like a bulb.

For to torch the night, to make it right, to *not* make it last—*O lacrimae!*

Where have all the transcendental poetries gone?

The Santa Sophia (a mosque quite adequate) lacks not only adequate inter-operability, but an *effective* scribberizing of its *own* sexual future.

Slinks...evolved and evolved, the style of the middle strain actually mute (mute scribberizing, nothing to scribberize; “non-discursive” “hard to follow” “untranslatable”).

A votive for them to candle up the night?

The Sistine Chapel is still without an adequate post-operative dyke chamber stocked with the globe’s meanest liquors.

*How exurb!*

Addendum: England is soft

Germany is soft

Finland is blanduminium

Brazil is medium-high quality water-worn stone

Mexico

is a granite church

on stilts—

Calexico—

Okay, welcome to Calexico.

*Frankfurt, December 2005*

## Il Penseroso

*For Rod Smith*

C U L T U R E

is

Appointments

~

E C O N O M Y

is

The New Sex

(since about 1450)

~

A R T

is

Art

for sex's sake

*suck*

~

C O U N T E R - C U L T U R E

is

Disappointing

~

M Y P O E T R Y

needs

to be more artily, sexily, disappointing

to *truly* suck?

~

I thought...

whatever

*New York, July, 2004*

## Vibes

bad vibe establishment  
in good vibe district

bad vibe anglo  
makes anxious  
bad vibe asian

makes anxious  
bad vibe *latino*

noting it

\*

good vibe establishment  
in bad vibe district

bad vibe bartender  
good vibe demeanor

good vibe tune  
bad vibe lyrics

good vibe asian  
makes a fool of  
good vibe anglo

makes a fool of  
good vibe latino

noting it

\*

bad vibe job market  
in good vibe media surround

bad vibe breaks in conversation  
in good vibe human-piercing resistant armor

face mask

vital organ breastplate

night dispelling goggles



special frequencies

special forces

code

grunts

groans

lyrics

*New York, August, 2004*

**Hospital**

when someone spends a lot of time running  
and bashing his head  
against a cement wall  
the cement grows warm  
and he curls up  
with it  
against his cheek  
like a starfish a medusa  
and senses  
how the body uses memory  
to bind it to the earth  
and he waits there for the moment  
when his eyes turn  
into wobbling tops  
and the whole colorful universe  
appears like the deep  
hole in the sink

## **Factory of Tears**

And once again according to the annual report  
the highest productivity results were achieved  
by the Factory of Tears.

While the Department of Transportation was breaking heels  
while the Department of Heart Affairs  
was beating hysterically  
the Factory of Tears was working night shifts  
setting new records even on holidays.

while the Food Refinery Station  
was trying to digest another catastrophe  
the Factory of Tears adopted a new economically advantageous  
technology of recycling the wastes of past –  
mostly, memories.

the pictures of the employees of the year  
were placed on the Wall of Tears.

i'm a recipient of workers comp from the heroic Factory of Tears.  
i have calluses on my eyes.  
i have compound fracture on my cheeks.  
i receive my wages with the product i manufacture.  
and i'm happy with what I have.

***to rafal wojaczek***

getting into your eyes  
mouth  
ears  
as if a filthy fly  
death is circling  
interfering  
from seeing  
eating  
listening  
finally  
you managed to catch it  
squeeze it  
in the fist  
you are satisfied now  
you tore its wings  
its head  
and let it flutter  
on the floor  
and you observe it for long  
or should I say forever

if you want to enter this flat  
you should know the password  
and yet you travel  
and yet you won't get in easily  
there are apples, parsley and my  
round bare nipples  
like two grains of red caviar  
they will make a good dessert  
and yet you travel  
your hand  
its color of sand  
holds tide to the rails  
the railings are long  
and there's a lot of your sand on it  
and I have no way out of this desert  
we will pick up a memory for this night  
like a prostitute  
and walk it on a wooden horse  
round the flat  
and yet you won't get in easily  
on the face of the clock  
you see the hands stampeding  
jumping on each other's shoulders  
jumping and being trampled by each other  
and here we are their unborn children  
where do you say you were when i  
was killing you in the city square at night?

## TO BRASÍLIA!

*Over*

*to the public.*

*Then a reply*

*struck a guideline, and you  
don't."*

Developed a form of

wooden landscape.

Topography  
on the satellite  
design:

"pilot plan"

meandering  
on or near the bank. As  
over would have seen  
in districts  
channeled until they look like  
landscape –  
them they live in a city.  
Plan

at the scale of the automobile,  
new skyline of six-stories  
under

survive.

The old car repair.  
Corridor,  
business streets that intersect

front door, the places used,  
parts of

scenes in the  
rapidly  
sorted out by  
category,

stripped,

proposed divide the  
characteristic geomorphology  
places.

And  
made it a principle

that had not been implemented  
where...

Decided  
plan. This permitted to concentrate on,  
not unlock, variables'  
infrastructure,  
components,  
every recently  
got started. City policy.

And plazas  
grouped around  
districts;  
capitol was

past  
betting blind square meters,

role  
projects. The tangible  
uttered  
organization

also be considered the  
present, a doubt a  
realpolitik.  
(Only when  
they are ready and able,  
completed  
highly  
less steel-

based  
leisure). As is,  
named the  
fully  
assembled: *"One will see the  
floating,  
buildings  
reflected  
into*

on: g  
s is ju  
opmen  
ing high  
arking inf  
f civic importa  
tment will be prin  
s to streets, just as the  
ut allowing for the diffe  
ill take a long time to bring  
ally important up to a downt  
legislation and public investm  
n of business improvement dis  
es of the stakeholders within

*deep*  
*same*

*is doing to*  
*city around."*  
Profile,

profile touching  
at two points:  
leisure or satellite?

Resting lightly on  
ground. About  
less than

enfolded  
across  
curvature;

"the ceiling"

scales our collective?  
The city  
absent,  
swarm. The same  
mute  
urban  
rounding...

...mobile

present  
time-lapse.

Contrasts  
rise in  
paring  
much degraded  
part. Revive the

places'  
life.  
Near  
the first jolt its

decades, standing footsteps  
stems method. Armed with

acetate,  
same time of day  
still stood - often a building,



bridge, curb or fire,  
mounted  
glass.

Tempting  
of happened  
shudder.  
Cityscapes have

wanted find the  
buildings razed.  
Dimension of  
city for the second,

buildings erected.  
They do not

into the "canyons"

taken

with an eye.  
If we keep

up on the reasserted

didactics

once molded

to yield the

meticulousness  
product,  
praise the  
ruined them.

Past or disgust?  
Vista  
could nothing

reopened to traffic.

Joined  
roughly,

cultivating  
utilized  
convergence:  
the place,  
the sphere,

avoid and  
admit as are most

finding a place, a condo,

that's right -  
a provincial city,  
remote. Many  
have  
distance

intended  
altogether. Which is

frame  
that the growth long-term,  
labo-  
ratory  
resembles  
about  
passerby and to see,

assign  
fact  
into *The*  
*Land* itself.

Produced  
into another condition

(out for

working on,  
started):

the landscape.  
An apartment,

the reverse.  
Science! Major  
functionalism!  
Any elaboration  
be preceded.

The optimization  
has priority,

the results  
approach

"accounted for."

Make the design  
seem overhauled.  
The correlation

meant building and  
everything entirely in the hands

with rented apartments,  
exterior corridor

of the floor plan with  
communal life; some  
ever, together.

**Amateur Chaos**  
**(in the shadow of Stevens' "Connoisseur of Chaos")**

- I.
  - A. The end  
is an explosion.
  - B. The beginning  
is an explosion.
  - C. (Pages of Illustrations.)
    - 1. A soldier firing at a man who is firing at him, both are hit,  
both are falling.
    - 2. Oil pooling into the crevices and holes at the center of  
the earth.
    - 3. A falling man memorizes a soldier face just as he pulled  
the trigger. At the center of the earth, a volcano.

II.

If its all about oil,  
and it is.

If poppies are growing wild again in the hills of Afghanistan,  
and they are.

If the butchers of Baghdad past and the butchers of Baghdad present are the past and  
present butchers of Baghdad,  
and they are.

If the same wardens convicted of allowing rape, torture, and sodomy to prevail in their  
prisons in Connecticut, New Mexico, and Utah were sent to direct the Abu Grahیب prison  
in Baghdad,  
and they were.

If 120,000 soldiers were made to believe that a country decimated by sanctions and  
bombed to pieces for 12 long years was somehow in possession of weapons capable of  
eliminating the free world,  
and they were.

If at hundreds of thousands have been killed, wounded, maimed, gone crazy, committed  
suicide just in the past year and just because of war,  
and they have.

If the memory of 9/11 is the tigers leap into the future and the future is the present ruled  
by madmen,  
and it is.

If terrorism is a many-headed hydra fueled by hatred and aggression, if fundamentalists  
are fueled by hatred and aggression, if their side and our side and all sides who think in

terms of good and evil are fueled by hatred and aggression,  
and it is, and they are, and we are.  
If most corporations work to undermine the interests of the people and political  
conventions are funded by corporations,  
and they are.  
If the origin of oil is inorganic and comes from the magma centermost layer of the earth,  
and it may be, perhaps.  
If cluster bombs spread shrapnel indiscriminately to enter bodies and explode into tiny  
fragments, if the morals of a society can be judged by the way it treats its prisoners,  
If 33 countries in the U.S. currently have 60 % of their population in jail  
And they do  
And it can  
And it is true  
If I am a person wanting only to be conscious  
If consciousness is as lethal as a full metal jacket  
If the still point on the turning wheel sucks entropy into itself  
and is sickened  
off course  
insane  
ludicrous  
and I am  
and it is  
and it is  
and it is  
  
If silence felled the tree because the fall landed on deaf ears  
If an evil man is a man who lacks a conscious and a truly evil man is one who believes  
his empty conscious is righteous, holy, and good,  
then .... and it has.... and he is .... and they are  
the trees  
the torture  
the future  
the memory  
the bombs  
the dead  
the point.

III.

When the contrast between life and death is made ugly  
by the fact of so many people dying ugly deaths,  
When all the beautiful ideas  
about how life and death are one  
seem so privileged.  
Lucky the few  
who are allowed to live out  
their natural lives  
without being blown  
to pieces.  
Life and death

twinned horned monster  
eats its tail and  
gags  
bulges  
explodes.

If a soldier dies while maiming  
another person the last  
living memory of that soldier's life will be in the mind of the  
person maimed  
the last memory of you  
is in the mind of the  
people who behold you  
so be gentle with them lest  
they be gentle with your image  
in memory  
in mourning  
in the work of  
seeing you in life.

Memory survives  
the corporal state:  
this is the only afterlife you can be sure of.

Isn't this enough of a good reason  
to resist joining in the logic  
of an imperial army?

#### IV.

A. Well, a new order certainly is a violent one.  
This proves something. A new order is predicated on lies.  
A truth in the otherwise distorted, maimed, tortured flow of information.  
News.  
No one mentioned anything about the facts.  
In the streamline.  
In the flow.  
In the wires.  
Just one more spinner  
on the lake, on the immense  
disorder of truths.

B. It is June while I write.  
Somehow there is a chill in the air.  
Bone shivering. Hacking. Feverish.  
Summer will be hot as hell, it will come to this,  
a change in the weather a change in the bile.  
Keel over  
Die biking  
Die watching sports

Die bombing  
Die bad heart  
Die liars  
Die presidential authority presidential atrocity  
Regal burials for former presidents who are murderers.

The violence of the new order strikes  
itself in the face  
and implodes.  
Bushhouse not fixed that  
tree is falling  
did you hear  
did you hear  
the news?

B and C are not fixed in time and place.  
They're not posing for some eternal portrait  
their winter has been a long cold reign  
but they are nothing more than little men chalked  
on the sidewalk.  
It does not take much pensiveness  
to see that  
the people stomping  
on the figures  
are smearing away  
the images one by one:  
they are resigning  
coming clean  
resisting  
because their conscious  
is no more permanent  
than chalk.

V.

The stomping crowds:  
They perceive the mountain  
which seems so unmovable  
to be an oyster  
in disguise.  
They kick it  
squash it  
return it to the sea.  
Poor evil oyster  
mistook the entirety of the earth  
and all the conflicting systems therein  
to be his bed....

**A Twilight of Minor Poets**

*or "This is the cow with the crumpled horn."*

I once thought we were beautiful  
because we were beasts, rumpy  
and pink, limp, inconsequential,  
compelled, with language, plus,  
to rut in. Dork pigs, quasi-canonically  
bent, each shit a grunt syllable.

\*

I once thought we were beautiful  
because we meant nothing  
standing on our heels, staring at windows,  
thinking some thing or other about light  
or thinking on the sound of "some" – we were  
hesitant, humming, stretched out – preludic –

then "return we to Don Juan. He begun /  
To hear new words, and to repeat them"

\*

I once thought we were beautiful  
because of "maraud" "naught"  
"fuck" "fire" "morning" "fake"  
"dismember" "decatalogue" "cow"  
"Ars" "Stars" "Hound" "How"  
or "Oh air, pride, plume, here buckle" .

At "canto" and "condemnation"—  
travel 73 feet on the phantom iamb  
and at that X dig a place like  
wilderness – a droning spot, verse.



### **Three Ringed**

Citizens A and B are acting out  
a travesty of emotion.

*This* is a real bear.

Shadows take the shapes of thugs.  
Who slits a throat to win a ruin?

Then the fearful beast Madame De Stahl  
does declare entirely by slaughter:

FEAR ONLY MAN.

All the children come to see:  
the conditions are "precaution".

## **Distaff**

The first creatures love on rugs  
hooked from smoke and small birds.

Tender is the copious. Tender is the nectar.  
Tender is the shadow of sleeping predators

The second creatures will follow the creases  
of branches and the leavings of squirrels.

The second creatures will claim an "exquisite gyroscope."  
They will not claim those ordinary movings of days.

Tender are the centipedes. Tender all red orders:

first how the ants fight upward,  
next how water slips from a skirt of snow.



**Dana Ward** is the author of *Standards* (Sea.Lamb.Press, 2004). Recent work is out or forthcoming in *Small Town*, *Coconut*, *The Hat*, *Dusie*, & other places. He lives in Cincinnati, OH & edits Cy Press.

**Clayton A. Couch** (<http://www.claytonacouch.com/>) works as a reference librarian at two Asheville, NC-area community colleges and as a review columnist for *Library Journal*. His first poetry collection, *Familiar Bifurcations* [xPress(ed), 2004], was recently reviewed in *Prague Literary Review*, and *Artificial Lure* (effing press, 2005), a chapbook, has received favorable commentary from *Book/Mark*, *Midwest Book Review*, and other publications. Poems have recently appeared in *MiPO*, *The Alterran Poetry Assemblage*, and *Verse*. From 2001-05, he edited and published *sidereality* (<http://www.sidereality.com/>).

**Heather Brinkman's** poems are individual units of the factory *Untitled*. Other workers can be found on lunch break in *Shampoo*.

**Rodrigo Toscano's** two latest books are *To Leveling Swerve* (Krupskaya Books, 2004) and *Platform* (Atelos, 2003) His work has been translated into French, German, Spanish, and Italian. Originally from California, Toscano has been living in NYC for the last seven years where he works at the Labor Institute. RT5LE9@aol.com

**Valzhyna Mort** ( Martynava) was born in 1981 in Minsk (former Soviet Union, now Republic of Belarus) where her first book *I'm thin as your eyelashes* was published in March 2005. She represented Belarus in a number of international poetry festivals and book fairs and translates from Polish and English into Belarusian. Recently lives in USA.

**Matt Turner's** poems have appeared in *Fence*, *Ur\*Vox*, and *Antennae*. He is the author of *Poems of Value/For the Authentic*, as yet unpublished. He lives in Beijing, PRC, and he can always be reached at [mateotornero@yahoo.com](mailto:mateotornero@yahoo.com).

**Kristin Prevallet** is the author of *Scratch Sides: Poetry, Documentation, and Image-text Projects*. She lives in Brooklyn.

**Anne Boyer** grew up in the middle of Kansas and now lives in the middle of Iowa. Look for new or forthcoming work in *TYPO*, *The Denver Quarterly*, *Octopus*, *Lit*, and *The Canary*.